

ADVANTAGES OF READING A SPEECH FROM A MANUSCRIPT:

1. You can select words with great care and rework and polish your speech, perhaps with the help of others.
2. You have no worry about forgetting the ideas or stumbling over the words, because the script is right there in front of you.
3. Some situations call for exact or careful wording or adherence to time limits. If the president of the United States is delivering a major address, a careless or incorrect word or phrase might lead to serious repercussions; if a scientist is reporting technical data she or he would be most concerned with accuracy; if an address is being given on radio or TV, it must not run over or under the time allotted.
4. It is possible to distribute copies of the address, for example, to news representatives.

DISADVANTAGES OF READING A SPEECH FROM A MANUSCRIPT:

1. The word-for-word approach limits flexibility and spontaneous adaptation to feedback. You may be reading and notice that several audience members appear puzzled. If you have practiced delivering the written text only, you may find it quite difficult to add information that might help clarify the material.
2. Many people do not read well, and their delivery may sound mechanical and stiff.
3. Unless you are skillful as a reader and very familiar with the material, eye contact may be inhibited, and this violates the principle of directness. When speakers read to the manuscript rather than to the audience, listeners often wonder why they came to hear the speech instead of writing for a copy of it.
4. Movement and gesture is inhibited; if you place the manuscript on a stationary lectern, you can scarcely move around at all.
5. It takes a lot of time to write a speech completely, to polish and rework it to be sure it is in oral style, and this time spent in writing might be better spent in repeated oral rehearsal of an extemporaneous speech.